

Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument

Resource Management Plans (RMPs)

BLM

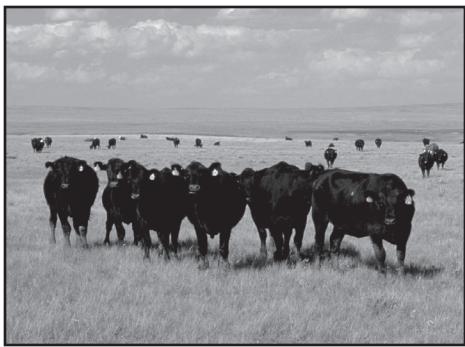
What is a Resource Management Plan?

A resource management plan (RMP) provides the overall framework for managing BLM-administered lands. The Montana/Dakotas Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Billings Field Office is preparing two RMPs. One RMP will be specific to Pompeys Pillar National Monument (PPNM); the Billings RMP will address the entire planning area in the Billings Field Office. One environmental impact statement (EIS) will be associated with both RMPs, but there will be a separate record of decision (ROD) issued for each plan. Currently, lands within the Billings Field Office, including PPNM, are managed according to the 1984 Billings Resource Area RMP, as amended.

Where is the planning area?

The Billings RMP will guide management for the approximately 427,200 acres of federally managed surface and about 906,000 subsurface (mineral estate) acres administered by the Billings Field Office in Big Horn, Carbon, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Wheatland and Yellowstone counties. The Billings Field Office planning area also includes administration of 6,340 acres of public land inside the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range in Big Horn County, Wyoming.

The Pompeys Pillar National Monument (PPNM) RMP will include the 51 acres of public land designated as a national monument on January 17, 2001. Pompeys Pillar NM is located along the southern bank of the Yellowstone River, about 30 miles east of Billings, Montana. It was designated a national monument for the purpose of protecting the ethnographic, historic and archaeological values associated with the massive sandstone outcrop known as Pompeys Pillar.



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What is the Scoping Process?

Scoping is a collaborative public involvement process in which the BLM asks the public and other agencies to identify planning issues to be addressed in the planning process. The scoping process began with the publication of a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register in May 2008. Comments or information gathered from scoping will be used in drafting the RMP revision. While comments or information can be submitted at any time during the planning process, they are most helpful if received by August 22, 2008. Additional opportunities for formal public involvement will be available upon the issuance of the Draft RMPs/EIS.

What are planning issues and criteria?

Scoping introduces preliminary planning issues and planning criteria to the public for comment. A planning issue is a matter of opportunity or concern over resource management activities or land use that entails alternatives between which to choose.

Planning criteria guide development of the plans by helping to define the decision space or “sideboards” of the planning process. The planning criteria will help BLM develop a reasonable range of alternatives that are tailored to the issues identified in the scoping process by the public and BLM. More information about preliminary planning issues and criteria is provided in this scoping package.

How can I get involved?

An integral component of the RMP process is public and community involvement. As part of scoping, we will hold open houses across the planning area, invite the participation of cooperating agencies, and undertake a comprehensive outreach effort to solicit information and involvement from the public. Comments/information can be submitted using the self-mailer included in this package or by submitting comments using any of the following methods:

Web Site: http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/fo/billings_field_office.html
Email: Billings_PompeysPillar_RMP@blm.gov
Fax: (406) 896-5281
Mail: Bureau of Land Management
Billings Field Office
Attn: Billings/PPNM RMPs
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, MT 59101

For further information or to have your name added to the RMP mailing list, contact Kim Prill, RMP Team Leader, at (406) 896-5199 or email: Billings_PompeysPillar_RMP@blm.gov. The mailing list will be used to notify the public about the progress of the planning effort as well as additional opportunities for public involvement and comment.

The web site can be used as a source of information for participating in the planning process, background documents, maps, meeting announcements, published bulletins and other RMP-related documents/information.

Will my comments be made public?

Before including your address, phone number, email address or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, will be available for public review. If you wish to withhold personal identifying information from public review or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must clearly state, in the first line of your written comment, “CONFIDENTIALITY REQUESTED.” Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of organizations or businesses, will be available for public review.

BLM's 9 – Step Planning Process

- 1 Planning Issues Identification**
- 2 Planning Criteria Development**
- 3 Data and Information Collection**
- 4 Analysis of the Management Situation**
- 5 Alternatives Formulation**
- 6 Alternatives Assessment**
- 7 Preferred Alternative Selection**
- 8 Management Plan Selection**
- 9 Implementation and Monitoring**

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| <p>1. Planning Issues Identification. Issues and concerns are identified through a scoping process that includes the public, Indian tribes, organizations, other federal agencies, and state and local governments. Summer 2008</p> | <p>6. Alternatives Assessment. The effects of each alternative are estimated. Summer/Fall 2009</p> |
| <p>2. Planning Criteria Development. Planning criteria are created to ensure decisions are made to address the issues pertinent to the planning effort. Planning criteria will be derived from a variety of sources and may be updated and changed as planning proceeds. The public has an opportunity to review and comment on the planning criteria during scoping before they are approved. Summer 2008</p> | <p>7. Preferred Alternative Selection. The alternative that best resolves planning issues is identified as the preferred alternative. Summer/Fall 2009</p> |
| <p>3. Data and Information Collection. Data and information for the resources in the planning area are collected based on the planning criteria. Ongoing</p> | <p>8. Management Plan Selection.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Issue the Draft RMPs/EIS – 90 day public review. Spring 2010b. Public comment analysis. Modify as necessary the Draft RMPs/EIS. Publish the Proposed RMPs/Final EIS – 30 day public review. Spring 2011c. Two separate records of decision (RODs) will be signed to approve the RMPs/EIS. Summer/Fall 2011 |
| <p>4. Analysis of the Management Situation. The current management of resources in the planning area is assessed. Fall/Winter 2008</p> | <p>9. Implementation and Monitoring. The management measures outlined in the approved plans are implemented on the ground, and monitoring is conducted to test their effectiveness. Changes are made as necessary to achieve desired results. Ongoing after RMPs are approved</p> |
| <p>5. Alternatives Formulation. A range of reasonable management alternatives that address issues identified during scoping is developed. Winter/Spring 2009</p> | |

Preliminary Planning Criteria

Planning regulations covering public land managed by the BLM (43 CFR 1610.4-2) require preparation of planning criteria to guide development of all RMPs or revisions. Planning criteria are the constraints or “ground rules” that guide and direct the development of the plan. They ensure that plans are tailored to the identified issues and ensure that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided.

Planning criteria are based on standards prescribed by applicable laws and regulations; agency guidance; the result of consultation and coordination with the public, Native American Indian tribes, other federal, state and local agencies and governmental entities; and analysis of information pertinent to the planning area. After gathering comments on planning criteria, the BLM will finalize the criteria and provide feedback to the public on the criteria to be used throughout the planning process.

Preliminary Planning Issues

A planning issue is a matter of opportunity or concern over resource management activities or land use that is well defined or topically discrete and entails alternatives between which to choose. This definition suggests that one entity or more is interested in a resource on federal land, that each entity may have different values for the resource, and that there are different ways (alternatives) in which to resolve the competition or demand.

Some of the preliminary planning issues and questions to be addressed are listed below. This list is not comprehensive, but includes some of the foremost issues currently facing the Billings Field Office.

- **Vegetation management:** *How will public lands be managed to provide desired plant communities that support the integrity of the ecological processes (water cycle, energy cycle, and nutrient cycle) provided by the vegetative community within rangelands and forests?*
- **Wildlife and fisheries management:** *How will public lands be managed to conserve wildlife species, maintain or improve their habitats and control invasive species?*
- **Special status species:** *How will public lands be managed to conserve and recover threatened, endangered, proposed and sensitive species?*
- **Commercial uses:** *How will BLM determine what public lands will be available for commercial activities and how will those activities be managed while protecting the integrity of other resources?* For example:

Energy development (oil and gas leasing, coal leasing, wind development)
Livestock grazing
Forest products and areas within community wildfire protection plans
Rights-of-way and land use authorizations
Locatable and saleable minerals
Commercial special recreation permits

- **Recreation management:** *How will recreation be managed in the planning area to provide for the use and enjoyment of public lands while protecting important resource values and ensuring user safety?*
- **Travel management and access:** *How will BLM develop a planned and manageable travel and transportation network?*
- **Special management area designations:** *What methods will be used to identify public lands that require special management attention to protect resource values, including areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) and wild and scenic rivers?*

Resources and Resource Uses in the Planning Area

The BLM manages and administers resources and uses throughout the planning area. To help you gain a better understanding of the diverse landscape in this area, we have provided a list of the various resources and resource uses.

Physical and Biological Resources

- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Geology
- Paleontology
- Special Status Species
- Soil
- Vegetation Communities (i.e., riparian/wetlands; woodland/forest communities; and invasive, non-native plant species)
- Visual Resources
- Water
- Wild Horses and Burros

Resource Uses

- Minerals (i.e., coal, coalbed natural gas, oil and gas, locatable and saleable minerals, etc.)
- Lands and Realty (i.e., rights-of-way, easements, land acquisition and disposal, etc.).
- Livestock Grazing
- Recreation
- Transportation and Access
- Renewable Energy (i.e., wind energy, geothermal resources, solar power/energy)
- Fire Management
- Special Designations (i.e., ACECs, recreation management areas, and WSAs).
- Social and Economic Conditions

Your Public Lands....

Did You Know....

- The Billings Field Office manages approximately 427,200 acres of public land and about 906,000 acres of federal mineral estate (sub-surface) in 8 counties in southcentral Montana.
- The Billings Field Office also administers 6,340 acres of public land inside the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range (PMWHR) in Big Horn County, Wyoming.
- The planning area is bisected by several major rivers: the Bighorn, Yellowstone, Musselshell, Clarks Fork, Stillwater and Boulder rivers. The area includes portions of several mountain ranges: the Snowies, Little Snowies, Belts, Crazies, Absarokas, Beartooths, and Pryors.
- Except for several contiguous blocks of land in Carbon and Musselshell counties, most of the public lands in the planning area are scattered tracts, intermingled with private and state lands.
- The planning area is abundant with natural, cultural and historic resources and special areas, including:
 - ✓ Pompeys Pillar National Monument (51 acres)
 - ✓ Nine areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs)
 - ✓ Four wilderness study areas (WSAs)
 - ✓ Segments of the Lewis & Clark and Nez Perce National Historic Trails
 - ✓ Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range
- The planning area provides a variety of commercial uses including: oil and gas leasing, coal leasing, livestock grazing, wind development opportunities, forest products, locatable and saleable minerals and commercial special recreation permits (outfitter/guides).
- In 2007, almost 300,000 visitors enjoyed public lands in the Billings Field Office and PPNM. Activities most frequently enjoyed include:
 - ✓ Camping & picnicking
 - ✓ Hunting
 - ✓ Non-motorized travel (mountain biking, hiking, horseback riding and backpacking)
 - ✓ Off-highway vehicle (OHV) travel
 - ✓ Cultural tourism (interpretation, education & nature study)

**Bureau of Land Management
Billings Field Office**



**Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument
Resource Management Plans**

The Billings Field Office is committed to listening to and learning from our neighbors, friends, and stakeholders, each of whom belong to a community of interest defined by a common concern for the future of our public lands. The information you provide will be helpful at this point in the planning process. We have provided some sample questions, or you may choose to use your own format for submitting comments or information.

To be most helpful, comments/information should be submitted on or before August 22, 2008. You may use this self-mailer or any of the following methods to submit comments:

Web Site: http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/fo/billings_field_office.html
Email: Billings_PompeysPillar_RMP@blm.gov
Fax: (406) 896-5281
Mail: Bureau of Land Management
Billings Field Office
Attn: Billings/PPNM RMPs
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, MT 59101

Please complete and return this information/comment card, even if you are not interested in future updates, so we can update our RMP mailing list. Simply refold this mailer to display the Business Reply Mailer, seal it with tape at the top (making sure the tape does not cover the bar code), and mail it. No postage is necessary.

- I am NOT interested in this project, please remove me from your list (complete and return to BLM).
 I am interested in receiving information – keep me on the mailing list (complete and return to BLM).

Your Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Affiliation (if applicable) _____

- I prefer receiving ONLY e-mail updates/documents (do not mail paper copies to me)

My e-mail address is: _____

We want to hear from you!
Thank you for taking the time to provide input.

1) What issues or concerns do you have regarding public land resources or uses within the Billings Field Office and/or Pompeys Pillar National Monument?

2) Various options will be studied for the planning area, including areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) and Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSRs). To address issues or concerns you identified above, what changes would you make?

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3) If you suggested changes or recommendations in any of your responses, what do you feel the benefits would be to: public land resources, public land users, businesses, communities, etc.?

4) Additional issues, comments or suggestions?

Feel free to send additional information or submit comments in your own format.

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